

Australian Standard™

**Conformity assessment—General
requirements for accreditation bodies
accrediting conformity assessment
bodies**



This Australian Standard was prepared by Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 22 August 2005.

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Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
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Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (Commonwealth)
Certification Interests (Australia)
Certification Interests (New Zealand)
Consumer Electronics Suppliers Association
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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Australian members of the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment. After consultation with stakeholders in both countries, Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand decided to develop this Standard as an Australian Standard rather than an Australian/New Zealand Standard.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO/IEC 17011:2004, *Conformity assessment—General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*.

The objective of this Standard is to specify general requirements for accreditation bodies assessing and accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

As this Standard is reproduced from an international standard, the following applies:

- (a) Its number appears on the cover and title page while the international standard number appears only on the cover.
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| <i>Reference to International Standard</i> | | <i>Australian/New Zealand Standard</i> | |
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| 9000 | Quality management systems— Fundamentals and vocabulary | 9000 | Quality management systems— Fundamentals and vocabulary |
| ISO/IEC | | AS ISO/IEC | |
| 17000 | Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles | 17000 | Conformity assessment— Vocabulary and general principles |

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INTRODUCTION

In the regulatory sector, government authorities implement laws covering the approval of products (including services) for reasons of safety, health, environmental protection, fraud prevention or market fairness. In the voluntary sector, many lines of industry have, both within an economy as well as globally, set up systems for conformity assessment and approval, aiming at achieving a minimum technical level, enabling comparability, and also ensuring competition on equal terms.

A prerequisite for trade on equal terms is that any product (including services), accepted formally in one economy, must also be free to circulate in other economies without having to undergo extensive re-testing, re-inspection, re-certification, etc. This should be the case regardless of whether the product (including services) falls wholly or partly under the regulatory sector.

In today's society it is often required to state objectively conformity of products (including services) to specified requirements. Conformity assessment bodies (CABs) can objectively state such conformity. These CABs perform conformity assessment activities that include certification, inspection, testing and, in the context of this International Standard, calibration.

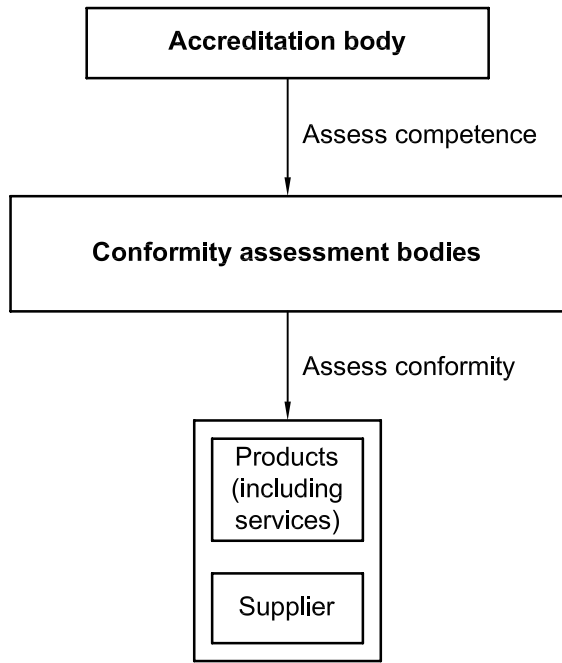
It is important for the purchaser, regulator and the public to know that these CABs are competent to perform their tasks. For that reason there is an increasing demand for impartial verification of their competence. Such verification is done by authoritative accreditation bodies that are impartial in relation to both the CABs and their clients, and which normally operate in a non-profit distributing manner (see Figure 1).

A system to accredit CAB conformity assessment services should provide confidence to the purchaser and regulator. Such a system should facilitate cross-border trade, as pursued by trade authorities and organizations. The ultimate goal is to achieve one-stop accreditation and one-stop conformity assessment.

A "cross border" trade facilitating system can work well if accreditation bodies and CABs all operate to globally accepted requirements in an equivalent manner and take into account the interests of all parties concerned.

This International Standard specifies the general requirements for accreditation bodies. Peer evaluation mechanisms have been created at regional and international levels, through which assurance is provided that accreditation bodies are operating in accordance with this International Standard. Those who have passed such an evaluation can become members of mutual recognition arrangements. Through regular re-evaluations, the continued adherence to this International Standard is assured.

These mutual recognition arrangement members facilitate the one-stop process, through recognition, promotion and acceptance of each other's accredited conformity assessments. This means that a CAB in an economy should not need to be accredited more than once for the same scope by different accreditation bodies.



Accreditation bodies assess the competence of CABs. They can facilitate trade by promoting global acceptance of conformity assessment results issued by accredited CABs. This is strengthened if they are peer-evaluated and are members of mutual recognition arrangements among the accreditation bodies.

CABs assess conformity of products, services and suppliers to specifications and/or requirements.

Purchasers acquire products (including services) that conform to specifications or buy from suppliers that conform to specific requirements. Regulators may set requirements for products and suppliers.

NOTE The word supplier is used to mean provider of products (including services).

Figure 1 — Flowchart

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

Conformity assessment — General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies general requirements for accreditation bodies assessing and accrediting conformity assessment bodies (CABs). It is also appropriate as a requirements document for the peer evaluation process for mutual recognition arrangements between accreditation bodies.

Accreditation bodies operating in accordance with this International Standard do not have to offer accreditation to all types of CABs.

For the purposes of this International Standard, CABs are organizations providing the following conformity assessment services: testing, inspection, management system certification, personnel certification, product certification and, in the context of this International Standard, calibration.

NOTE General requirements for these bodies have been established, for example in International Standards and Guides (examples of which are given in the Bibliography).

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9000:2000, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*

ISO/IEC 17000:2004, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

VIM:1993, *International vocabulary of basic and general terms in metrology*, issued by BIPM, IEC, IFCC, ISO, IUPAC, IUPAP and OIML

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply. Where the terms and definitions are neither included in this document nor in ISO/IEC 17000, the terms and definitions of ISO 9000 or the International vocabulary of basic and general terms in metrology (VIM) apply. If different definitions for specific metrological terms are given, the definitions of VIM have preference.

3.1 accreditation

third-party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks

3.2 accreditation body

authoritative body that performs accreditation

NOTE The authority of an accreditation body is generally derived from government.



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